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TOP STORY

Property to be returned to accused killer's family

By JOSH CHAMPLIN Argus-Press Staff Writer

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Michigan State Police and other individuals are shown at Mark Latunski's former home in this February file photo. A hearing is scheduled for next week that could evict the current occupant. The home will apparently be returned to the Latunski family.

Argus-Press File Photo

CORUNNA — The former home of accused killer Mark Latunski apparently will be returned to his family after their attorney submitted \$103,000 to the lawyer for the person who purchased the property during a bank auction earlier this year.

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Latunski's conservator.

Mark Latunski, who had owned the home and property, is being held in the Michigan Center for Forensic Psychiatry in Ypsilanti after being found incompetent to stand trial for the murder and mutilation of 25-year-old Kevin Bacon of Swartz Creek. Latunski's brother Paul was placed in charge of Mark Latunski's assets.

The property, 703 W. Tyrrell Road in Bennington Township, was sold at a bank auction Feb. 26 at the circuit courthouse in Corunna for \$101,733.28 to Steven Deehl. His son Alex has been living at the property since shortly after it was purchased.

In Michigan, owners of foreclosed homes can negate a bank sale by paying the purchase prices, plus fees, to the purchaser within a set period of time, typically six months, but sometimes as long as one year. If the property is considered abandoned, the period is 30 days.

Attorneys for Security Credit Union, of Flint, published a notice of foreclosure Jan. 23 in The Argus-Press, as required by state law. According to the notice, Latunski took out a mortgage Oct. 29, 2013, for \$76,336.18 for his property.

Just before the auction, Shiawassee County Probate Court Judge Thomas Dignan issued an emergency order appointing Paul Latunski as Mark Latunski's conservator, according to dozens of pages of court filings.

That order allowed Latunski's family members to "sequester and secure all assets and pay only necessary bills."

Paul Latunski told The Argus-Press in May that he had twice attempted to submit payment to the Shiawassee County Prosecutor's Office for the outstanding balance owed on the mortgage. He claimed the payment was refused both times and the county, he said, claimed Mark Latunski had abandoned the property.

The Shiawassee County Register of Deeds confirmed Wednesday morning that attorneys for Latunski submitted a payment of \$103,000 to the attorney for Steven Deehl.

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A message to Justin English, who is listed in court documents as Paul Latunski's attorney, seeking comment was not returned.

George Rizik, attorney for Steven Deehl, said that his client never took possession of the property or resided there, and does not plan to contest the transfer of the property to Paul Latunski.

"Mr. Latunski wanted to redeem and we sent Mr. English an email saying, 'Absolutely, go ahead and redeem it.' They paid the redemption amount," Rizik said. He said Alex Deehl was staying at the property without Steven Deehl's permission.

In February, as the bank auction took place, Shiawassee County Sheriff's Office deputies and Michigan State Police troopers were called to the Latunski home for what they called at the time "a civil dispute." According to Mark Latunski's ex-wife, she, Latunski's estranged husband Jamie Arnold and Latunski's children arrived at the house to collect belongings. When they arrived, the murder suspect's siblings were unwilling to allow them inside to collect items.

Officers were able to mediate the situation when they arrived, and Latunski's siblings allowed his children to enter the house and collect personal items.

Later, Paul Latunski was charged with two felony counts of assault with a deadly weapon for allegedly breaking into the house March 28 with a shotgun and threatening Alex Deehl. However, those charges were dismissed by prosecutors in June. It appears the dismissal is directly related to the civil proceedings initiated by Paul Latunski as conservator.

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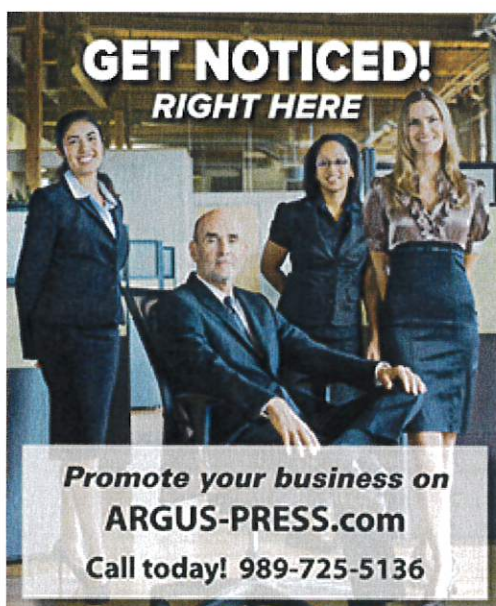
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to court documents, Alex Deehl is scheduled to be deposed Aug. 28, but no further dates in the circuit court case have yet been set.

Mark Latunski is facing open murder charges in connection with Swartz Creek resident Kevin Bacon's death in December 2019. Michigan State Police, acting on a request for assistance from the Clayton Township Police Department, found Bacon's body in Latunski's residence Dec. 28, 2019. Latunski was arraigned Dec. 30, 2019, on felony counts of open murder and mutilation of a human body.

Mark Latunski is currently lodged at the Michigan Center for Forensic Psychiatry. If he is not found competent after 15 months at the center, the case will become a civil matter, and Latunski would likely be confined to a mental hospital — possibly permanently.



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